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THE PROPAGANDA BATTLEFRONT

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Propagandists As Prophets

"The specter of hunger may stalk America in this year of 1943 . . . We are not only going to have famine in this country, but I look for food rioting . . . Unless our farm policy is changed, we face disaster . . . Disaster is now here."

WHERE IS THAT "FAMINE"?

This was the cry of the "vermin" press just a little less than a year ago. From New York to California the alleged seditionists, their fellow "vermin," their "respectable" friends in Congress, and the "Newspaper Axis"—the *N. Y. Daily News,* the *Chicago Tribune,* and the *Washington Times-Herald*—screamed that starvation would be with us before the year was out.

The New Year has come. Not only has there been no "famine" or "food riots," but 1943 was a record year in per-capita civilian consumption. According to a report by the National City Bank of New York, the 130,000,000 Americans ate much better during 1943 than they did during the pre-war years.

Even though their predictions often proved ridiculous, the "vermin" are unabashed. For one thing, threats of "famine" proved a convenient stick with which to beat the Administration. For another, few fears strike as close to home as fear of hunger, and it is a relatively simple job to magnify necessary wartime restrictions, such as rationing, until they begin to look like sinister international conspiracies. Besides, people tend to forget predictions anyway.

There are indications that the "vermin" intend to keep right on using the "hunger" bogey. Everyone from the anti-Semitic Carl Mote to the Ku Klux Klansman Eugene Talmadge keeps right on screaming about the "conspiracy" being hatched by the "planners" to give all of our food away. As F. H. Sattler put it recently: "It's a plot to create and make possible a food shortage . . . Once the Christian food brokers are weeded out, it will leave the field clean for atheist rule . . . Christians are to be squeezed and be denied a food card . . . "

All this "hunger" talk started back in February, 1942, when George Sokolsky, columnist for the *New York Sun,* said it was the "collapse of Russian food production" in 1917 that made the Communist revolution possible. The "boys" got the idea right away: the Russians were hungry; therefore the Communist revolution was successful; the Americans have rationing and are lease-lending food; therefore we are going to be hungry soon; there-

fore the Communists may pull a successful revolution here.

Gerald L. K. Smith, the Detroit rabble-rouser, was among the first to jump on the bandwagon. The March 1942 issue of his magazine, *The Cross and the Flag,* carried an article entitled, "FAMINE? Will Bureaucratic Stupidity Bring Hunger to America?" At his America First Party rallies cheering delegates marched up and down the aisles carrying placards which read "BUTTER FOR AMERICANS FIRST!" and "MEAT FOR AMERICANS FIRST!" Smith followed up with more articles in his magazine—articles with titles like this: "Feed the World and Starve America?"

One booklet, which Smith offered for sale, was "Famine in America," by Joseph Kamp, New York leader of the Constitutional Educational League. *"Famine"* is a 50-page slick-paper job which sells for fifty cents. It is replete with documents and quotations, all of which go to prove that "we have come to the verge of hunger" and that "there is miserable mismanagement by a bungling bureaucracy in Washington."

"Famine in America" rapidly became a cliche among the "vermin". Carl Mote, in his magazine *America Preferred,* ran an article by that title. William Kullgren, who is under indictment for sedition, offered Kamp's booklet for sale; so did John Scott, editor of *Money,* who has been connected with a number of the alleged seditionists.

Meanwhile, E. J. Garner, who is under indictment for conspiring to set up a Nazi regime in the United States, soon began circulating a leaflet called "Messages to the Masses." This leaflet attacked rationing and declared that "Totalitarian Food Production Means Ruin to the Nation." And Court Asher, the alleged seditionist in Muncie, Indiana, began to get alarmed too about the nation's food policy.

Various violently anti-Administration Congressmen were quick to take up the cry. Rep. Fred E. Busbey (Rep., Ill.) said that the "bureaucrats" were "shrewd, calculating men" who "have devoted years to planning the totalitarian state and mapping the method by which it can be achieved." Rep. Leon H. Gavin, following the same line, charged that there was a plot to throw America into confusion. "The first step would be to make America hungry," he said.

The "Newspaper Axis"—the *N. Y. Daily News,* the *Chicago Tribune,* and the *Washington Times-Herald*—as usual fell into line. The New York and Washington branches discovered that "We had better punch another hole or two in our belts and get ready for still leaner times . . . the consequences are going to be hard to take." Meanwhile the *Chicago Tribune* theorized that rationing was a "crack-pot idea" designed by bureaucrats who wanted to "try out their pet theories of regimentation."

Friends of Democracy lays no claim to being expert in agricultural matters. However, a few conclusions can be drawn. First of all, those who cry "hunger" the loudest are rabid isolationists whose chief activity before Pearl Harbor was telling us that we had nothing to fear from Germany and Japan, and whose chief activity since Pearl Harbor has been berating the Administration. Secondly, less biased sources tell us that we ate well in 1943 and that we're going to eat well in 1944. According to both the National City Bank of New York and the *New York Herald Tribune,* neither of which are exactly Roosevelt partisans, we're doing well. We harvested a bumper crop in 1943, the City Bank says, and we'll eat more food per capita during 1944 than we did in pre-war years. "We are eating fine," the *Herald Tribune* said in December, 1943, and "Next year we will get along just as well." The *Herald Tribune,* incidentally, is a Republican newspaper.

Propagandists Prepare To Exploit Veterans

"AMERICAN VETERANS FIRST"

In time of war it's always "good politics" to campaign for large bonuses for the service men. In the first place the service men comprise a large section of the voters, and potential voters. And besides, most of them have wives, and mothers and fathers, and brothers and sisters whom they are able to influence.

Gerald L. K. Smith, the Detroit rabble-rouser and friend of the indicted seditionists, has been accused of many things, but no one ever accused him of being a bad politician. Therefore it isn't surprising to see Smith launch a crusade for "American Veterans First"—$1,000 cash to each veteran as he is mustered out, plus a "rehabilitation bonus" of some indeterminate amount.

The only original part of Smith's crusade is the angle from which he approaches it. Smith begins by implying that he's the one who raised the service men's base pay from $21 to $50 a month. (This, no doubt, will come as a surprise to many of Smith's opponents.) With this amazing record of achievement for one lone crusader,

Smith, of course, becomes the logical person to lead the new crusade for the service men's bonus.

Smith next says that the "bureaucrats" have "boondoggled" and "squandered" $6,000,000,000 in Latin America. (As it happens, these figures were discredited a month before Smith used them. Less than one-tenth of that amount has been spent, according to Nelson Rockefeller, co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs, and Mr. Rockefeller ought to know.) But Smith wants to take these "huge sums" which are being "squandered" by the "New Deal politicians and internationalists" and spend them on the American war veterans instead. This $6,000,000,000 "alone would pay six million soldiers $1,000 each upon being mustered out," Smith said.

This new crusade is going full speed ahead. Smith devoted the whole back of the January issue of his magazine, *The Cross and the Flag,* to plugging it. He sent out a circular letter early in January appealing to his supporters to donate money to the campaign. He says that he's ordering from his printer 100,000 petitions to Congress asking for such a bonus, and each of these petitions provides space for fifteen signatures. He's very busy holding his America First Party rallies in the major cities throughout the country, and the petitions are distributed at these rallies.

Smith isn't the first of the pro-Fascists to go all out for the soldier vote. Joe McWilliams, who wanted to be "America's Hitler," tried it, but Joe was going to give $7,500 to each service man. Quantitatively, Smith may be a piker by comparison. But Smith may succeed where Joe failed, for Smith is a slicker politician. Joe is now under indictment for conspiring to set up a Nazi regime in the United States; Smith, so far, remains untouched.

De Aryan Frees the "Subversives"

During the last few months C. Leon de Aryan has been freeing, one by one, the persons convicted under California's Subversive Organizations Registration Act. In all, nine assorted German-American Bundists and Hitler-heilers were convicted; so far de Aryan has secured the release of six on bail, pending another hearing, and has applied for a writ of habeas corpus for the seventh person, F. K. Ferenz.

De Aryan, who has been indicted twice for sedition by Federal Grand Juries, claims that the law under which these nine were convicted is unconstitutional. Anyone who registers with California's Secretary of State as a leader of a "subversive organization," he says, automatically pleads guilty to a Federal offense—sedition.

Released already are Genevieve Kerrigan, Leone Menier, Joan McBride, James McBride, and Baron and Daniel Van Meter. Convicted at the same time but still in jail are F. K. Ferenz, Robert Noble, and Ellis O. Jones.

Miss Menier was an associate of Robert Noble; the McBrides and the Van Meters worked with the German American Bund. Ferenz handled Nazi motion pictures in California. Noble and Jones, who ran Friends of Progress and the National Copperheads, respectively, staged mock impeachment proceedings against President Roosevelt which lasted well after Pearl Harbor. It was Noble who, during the Battle for Bataan, yelled, "To hell with MacArthur!" Ferenz, Noble and Jones currently are under two Federal indictments for sedition and one indictment charging them with conspiring to set up a Nazi regime in the United States.

De Aryan has been working for the release of these nine for some months. Misses Kerrigan and Menier were freed first, then Mrs. McBride. James McBride and the Van Meters were released on bail last December. The Supreme Court of California denied de Aryan's application for a writ for Ferenz. However, there are indications that Ferenz will appeal the decision.

If de Aryan continues to work on this case, which he apparently has every intention of doing, he may free all nine of them—including the three who are charged with being Nazi conspirators.

PROPAGANDA IS A WEAPON

Propaganda is a weapon as much as submarines, tanks and bombers. Friends of Democracy has been carrying on a militant campaign against anti-democratic propaganda for a number of years. The impact of the Axis propaganda is now tremendous. Therefore, it is necessary for Friends of Democracy to carry on more vigorously than heretofore. Our organization invites the cooperation and support of all who are concerned about the preservation of democratic civilization.

Raised Eyebrows Department

The *Broom* for January 31, 1944, carries this item: "When the Jew wants Father Coughlin off the air he gives the Pope $125,000 and lo and behold! Coughlin gets orders from his bishop to shut up."

Edward Holton James, who thinks that Hitler is 100 per cent right, wrote in a letter recently published in the *Constitutionalist:* "Neither Germany nor Italy raised a weapon against us, and Japan was begged and asked to attack us by the Chief Executive of the United States . . . Conscription of men and women has now become the enemy of the human race . . . *When the conscripts turn their cold steel against the tyranny now rearing itself at home, they will be able to recover freedom and say, 'Blessed are the Peacemakers'.*"

While newspapers like the *New York Post* protest that the State Department is moving too slowly in ridding southern Italy of Fascism, Frederick J. Libby of the Peace Now Movement, has a different idea. He says, in effect, that fascism isn't so bad and that Secretary Hull is backing a "Communist Front" government in Italy.

Mrs. Lucinda Benge, head of the Mothers of Sons Forum in Cincinnati, recently said of President Roosevelt: "IMPEACH THIS TRAITOR TO OUR COUNTRY." She also asked Congress to "forbid the slaughter of innocent men for a worse than futile cause, under the pretext of 'defending' the nation. 'And if this be treason, gentlemen,—make the most of it!' " Well?

The *Chicago Tribune* has gone all out in support of the 30 persons indicted for conspiracy to set up a Nazi regime in the United States. It ran an interview with Elizabeth Dilling who charged that the whole thing was just a Communist plot. Its editorial on the conspiracy case charged that the indictment was violation of "civil liberties"—this even though the Civil Liberties Union won't touch the case. These choice bits from the *Chicago Tribune* have been reprinted widely in the "vermin" press —in the publications edited by the alleged conspirators and their friends.

The story of Gerald B. Winrod has been told many times. But briefly it is this: Winrod crusaded against the teaching of evolution in the olden days. When the Ku Klux Klan rode the plains of Kansas, he crusaded against the Catholics. When Hitler came to power, he suddenly discovered that the Jews were the true "anti-Christ." Now he is under indictment for conspiracy to set up a Nazi regime here. Many, many thousands of words have been written about Winrod during the last ten years, but it took William D. Herrstrom, Fundamentalist editor of *Bible News Flashes,* to think up this gem: "Throughout the United States, Christian people are discussing the similarity of Dr. Gerald B. Winrod's persecution and the persecution of Dr. Martin Niemoeller in Germany."

The Women's League for Political Education, 6209 South Laflin Street, Chicago, seems to be a new organization in the "vermin" field, according to the January *Constitutionalist.* Like the "mothers" groups in Chicago, it accuses the Administration of getting us into the war and calls for an immediate negotiated peace.

A certain ultra-reactionary group in New York—no names!—recently mourned the passing of George N. Peek. Two days later C. Leon de Aryan printed a story in the *Broom* saying that this same George N. Peek once had invited him (de Aryan) to come calling and to explain all the things that are wrong with the Jews. De Aryan went, he says, and talked for hours while Peek listened attentively.

MUST READING

"The American Senate and World Peace" by Kenneth Colgrove—published by the Vanguard Press.

"Germany Will Try It Again" by Sigrid Schultz—published by Reynal and Hitchcock.

"What To Do With Germany" by Louis Nizer—published by Ziff-Davis Co.

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